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Arthur L. Liman
1285 Avenue of the Americas
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Dear Mr. Liman:

I had the pleasure of hearing you speak at the New York Public Library on the evening of May 7. As I listened to you speak of North shredding files I was reminded of my service on the staff of the Senate Civil Liberties Committee back in 1937. I believe that one of the early investigations of that committee, chaired by Senator Robert La Follette,Jr., was the source of the development of office shredders.

Early in 1937 the Committee which was charged with investigation of undue interference with labor's right to organize and bargain collectively opened an investigation of the activities of labor spy agencies such as Railway Audit and Inspection (R.A.&I.) and Pinkerton's Detective Agency. The investigation which was headed by Heber Blankenhorn sent out its staff members to a number of offices of these and other suspected labor spy agencies in a number of cities with subpoenas for any documents in their files relating to labor espionage. We staff members were instructed to tell the agencies subpoened to cull the material called for by the subpoenas from their files for presentation to the investigators the next day for examination. We were also given subpoenas to be served on the superintendents of the buildings in which the detective agencies were located. These called for the sequestration of the waste from the agency offices that night and for the next few nights for delivery to committee staff members. The next day we picked up the sacks of waste and shipped them to the committee's offices in Washington, D.C. where other staff members checked the torn paper and reconstructed hundreds of labor spy reports which soon thereafter were used as exhibits in hearings where the contents of the reconstituted labor spy reports were placed in the record in connection with oral testimony from the officers of the labor spy agencies.

Soon after the committee's hearings resulted in front page stories in the national press, office supply companies began coming out with ads for electric paper shredders. Before 1937 there were no such machines.

That committee helped bring about effective enforcement of the National Labor RElations Act and may even have helped a majority of the then Supreme Court decide that the NLRA was constitutional. The committee's hearings never had a Brendan Sullivan challenge it as you did. Which leads me to question why no action was taken by your committee to place some reins on his behavior?

Sincerely,

Sol Rabkin